DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 188 684 JC 800 341

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TITLE The Role of the California Postsecondary Education Commission: From Its Origins into the Future.
PUB DATE Jul 79
NOTE 19p.: Graduate seminar paper, Pepperdine University

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Advisory Committees: *Agency Role: Clearinghouses: College Planning: Coordination: Educational Finance: Educational History: Information Dissemination: Institutional Autonomy: Institutional Evaluation: *Planning Commissions: Postsecondary Education: Program Evaluation: *State Agencies: State Aid: State History: State Legislation: *Statewide Planning
IDENTIFIERS California: *California Postsecondary Education Commission

ABSTRACT

This history and examination of the responsibilities of the California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC) begins by stating the original purposes of the Commission to coordinate and plan educational offerings in California beyond the high school level. The paper then examines the growth of the need for coordination of the segments of higher education, as reflected in state educational legislation since 1899 and in the political factors leading to the creation of the Commission in 1974. It goes on to describe the Commission's composition and to outline the functions the CPEC carries out: (1) acting as a clearinghouse for information on postsecondary education, (2) coordinating institutional and system-wide long-range planning, (3) overseeing institutional and program evaluation, and (4) advising the legislature and governor on matters concerning the acquisition or construction of new institutions or branches and on the merits of funding requests. The report then examines the Commission's limited enforcement power which, as a concession to institutional autonomy, confines the Commission to a largely advisory and informational role. The potential for greater authority is then examined in light of the growing state role in community college finance. A bibliography is provided. (JP)

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PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY

THE ROLE OF THE CALIFORNIA POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION COMMISSION: FROM ITS ORIGINS INTO THE FUTURE

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

EDUCATION 713

POLITICS AND PUBLIC RELATIONS OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES

PROFESSOR LUSKIN

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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JULY 1979

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INTRODUCTION

The California Postseconday Education Commission was created by the Legislature and Governor in 1974 to coordinate and plan for education beyond the high school level. The intent was to create a statewide agency to assure the effective utilization of public postsecondary educational resources (thereby eliminating waste and unnecessary duplication); promote diversity, innovation and responsiveness to student and societal needs through planning and coordination; to make educational policy recommendations which are a primary consideration in developing State policy and funding for higher education; and to encourage the participation of faculty members, students, administrators, and members of the general public in carrying out its duties and responsibilities.

REVIEW OF THE NEED PRIOR TO 1974

After World War II there began increased competition for dollars, students, new functions, programs, and campuses between the various segments of public higher education. A growing need for coordination between the segments began to emerge. There had earlier been efforts to coordinate and plan higher education within California. As far back as 1899 the California Educational Commission was created to make recommendations for the improvement of higher education. The Suzzalo Report of 1932, prepared by President Henry Suzzalo of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, proposed to place all public higher education in California under one authority -- the University of California Regents. In 1933 a law established a State Council for Educational Planning and Coordination but it soon ceased to function effectively. The Strayer Report in 1948 entitled "The Survey of the Needs of California in Higher Education" received only limited legislative support. It was not until 1955 when the McConnell Report, called "A Re-Study of the Needs of California in Higher Education," was completed that public and educational opinion began to solidify on the growing need for coordination. These and other pressures resulted in Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 88 introduced in 1959 which demanded at once (i.e. in eight months) direction for the future of higher education in California. The Liaison Committee, an ad hoc committee which had earlier been established between the University of California Regents and the State Board of Education for the State Colleges for the purpose of conference, study and planning was in charge of the Master Plan Survey. During the formation of the Master Plan there was a

recommendation for a coordinating council of twelve (three from each: junior colleges, State Colleges, the University, and the independent institutions). The Legislature added three persons representing the general public.

The Donahoe Act of 1960 incorporated most of the significant recommendations contained in the Master Plan for Higher Education in California, 1960-1975. The law gave the Coordinating Council three primary tasks: (1) review of budgets and capital outlay requests of the public segments and advice on the general level of support sought; (2) interpretation of the functional differences among the segments and assurance that each is playing its proper role; and (3) development of plans for the orderly growth in higher education. The role of the Council gradually emerged as a referee for enforcing the major provisions of the Master Plan, especially the differentiation of functions. Although the composition of the Council was later changed to include a majority of public members, the Council emerged as a self regulating mechanism for higher education.

A legislative study in 1969 attacked the segments for duplication of effort and needless competition, and also criticized the Council for not confronting the issues. The Legislature requested the Council to assume a stronger role in coordinating and directing the implementation of program budgeting of the segments of higher education. The Council reviewed the entire Master Plan and recommended several changes to strengthen its role. However, by that time the fate of the Council had been determined.

The Legislature abolished the Coordinating Council in 1973 and established the California Postsecondary Education Commission in its place. Three major changes were made. First, the Commission's membership not only included a majority of public members and reduced the segmental representatives to six of twenty-three, but the chief executive officers were excluded from

Commission membership. Second, the law assigned the Commission far more numerous and explicit duties than those of the Council. Finally, the Commission received explicit authority to frame the State's Five Year Plan and expansion and update of the Master Plan.

COMPOSITION OF THE COMMISSION

The Commission consists of the following members:

(1) Two representative of the Regents of the University of California designated by the Regents; two representatives of the Trustees of the California State University and Colleges designated by the Trustees; and two representatives of the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges designated by the Board. Representatives of the Regents, the Trustees, and the Board of Governors shall be chosen from among the appointed members of their respective boards, but in no instance shall an ex officio member of a governing board serve on the Commission.

(2) Two representatives of the independent California colleges and universities which are accredited by a national and regional association which is recognized by the United States Office of Education. These members shall be appointed by the Governor from a list or lists submitted by an association or associations of such institutions.

(3) The chairpersons of the California Advisory Council on Vocational Education and Technical Training and the Council for Private Postsecondary Educational Institutions or their designees from among the other members of their respective councils.

(4) The President of the State Board of Education or his designee from among the other members of the Board.

(5) Twelve representatives of the general public appointed as follows: four by the Governor, four by the Senate Rules Committee, and four by the Speaker of the Assembly. The combined appointments shall include adequate

representation on the basis of sex, racial, ethnic, and economic groups in the state. None of the appointed members may be regularly employed in any administrative, faculty, or professional position by any institution of public or private postsecondary education.

ROLE OF THE COMMISSION

There are four broad roles with the functions listed below:

Clearinghouse Function

1. The Commission shall act as a clearinghouse for postsecondary education and as a primary source of information for the Legislature, the Governor, and other agencies.
2. The Commission shall develop a comprehensive data base ensuring comparability of data from diverse sources.
3. The Commission shall collect information and conduct studies of projected manpower supply and demand and disseminate the results of such studies.
4. The Commission shall maintain and update annually an inventory of all off-campus programs and facilities for education, research and community service operated by public and private institutions.

Planning Function

1. The Commission shall require the governing boards of the public segments to develop and submit institutional and systemwide, long range plans.
2. The Commission shall prepare a five year State plan which shall integrate the planning efforts of the public segments and other pertinent plans.
3. The Commission shall update the State plan annually.
4. The Commission is to participate in appropriate stages of the executive and legislative budget process, as requested, and advise as to whether segmental budgetary requests are compatible with the State plan.
5. The Commission is designated as the State agency to carry out the purposes and provisions of the Higher Education Amendments of 1972 (Section 1202 of Title X) in regard to planning.
6. The Commission may undertake other functions and responsibilities appropriate to its planning role.

Evaluation Functions

1. The Commission shall establish a schedule for the public segments' review of selected educational programs, evaluate the program review processes of the public segments, and report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature.
2. The Commission shall report annually on the financial conditions of independent institutions and other relevant information so that the Governor and the Legislature can understand the impact of State policies and programs on independent institutions.

3. The Commission shall develop criteria for evaluating the effectiveness of all aspects of postsecondary education.
4. The Commission shall review all proposals for changes in admission eligibility pools for public institutions and make recommendations.
5. The Commission shall periodically review and make recommendations concerning the need for and availability of adult and continuing education programs.
6. The Commission may, from time to time, submit to the Governor and Legislature a report which contains recommendations as to the necessary or desirable changes, if any, in the functions, policies and programs of the several segments of public and private postsecondary education.
7. The Commission shall develop and submit plans to the Legislature and the Governor for the funding and administration of a program to encourage innovative educational programs by institutions of postsecondary education.
8. The Commission shall serve as a stimulus to the segments and institutions of postsecondary education by projecting and identifying societal and educational needs and encouraging adaptability to change.

Coordinating Function

1. The Commission is to participate in appropriate stages of the executive and legislative budget process as requested.
2. The Commission is to advise the Legislature and Governor regarding the need for and location of new institutions and campuses of public higher education.
3. The Legislature intended that sites for new institutions or branches of the University of California and the California State University and Colleges, and such classes of off-campus centers as the Commission shall determine, shall not be authorized unless recommended by the Commission.
4. The Legislature intended that the Community Colleges would not receive State funds for acquisition of sites or construction of new institutions, branches or off-campus centers unless recommended by the Commission. Acquisition of non-State funded Community College institutions, branches, and off-campus centers shall be reported to the Commission.
5. The Legislature intended to utilize the advice of the Commission in requests for funding new and continuing graduate and professional programs, enrollment levels, and capital outlay for existing and new campuses, colleges, and off-campus centers.
6. The Commission shall review proposals by the public segments for new programs and make recommendations regarding such proposals to the Legislature and the Governor.
7. The Commission shall consider the relationships between academic and occupational and vocational education programs and coordinate State and local and public and private persons and agencies with a direct interest in these areas.
8. The Commission is designated as the State educational agency to carry out the purposes and provisions of the Educational

Amendments of 1972, Section 1202 of Title X, Section 1055 of Title X of the Higher Education Act of 1972, and is vested with all necessary power and authority to cooperate with the government of the United States.

9. The Commission may undertake other functions and responsibilities appropriate to its coordinating role.

EFFECTS OF THE COMMISSION

An attempt was made in creating the Commission to balance the state's interest in holding the segments and institutions accountable with their need for autonomy. Most of the functions are advisory or informational in nature. However, the Commission has authority relating to institutions in the following selected areas:

(1) Require institutions to submit data on plans and programs, costs, selection and retention, enrollment, plant capacities, and other matters pertinent to effective planning, policy development, articulation, and coordination.

(2) Require the development and submission of long range plans.

(3) Review proposals for new programs and make recommendations.

(4) Maintain and update annually an inventory of all off-campus programs and facilities.

The authority of the Commission was intentionally minimal. CPEC compiles information, makes recommendations, conducts studies. etc. Authority is limited and the nature of enforcement, that is requiring compliance, is unclear in law. CPEC does not have authority for program approval -- their role is review and recommendatory. CPEC does not have authority for approval of off campus sites -- community colleges would not receive state funds for acquisition of sites or construction of new institutions, branches, or off-campus centers unless recommended by the Commission. However, community colleges shall report off campus facilities to the Commission. The Commission does have the authority to require institutions to submit

data and make long range plans. The normal response of an institution may be to respond to any inquiry from a state agency. However, one should be informed as to their rights and what authority the agency possesses to require compliance. The author is not urging failure to comply, but rather informed responses. CPEC is serving an important role but limited in terms of law.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

Since CPEC is young it may be too soon to determine what other courses, if any, it might take. For the immediate future this author does not see the Commission becomming a superboard. The segments are powerful, there is a tradition of autonomy, and CPEC is limited by law. However, since the state is assuming greater financial support of community colleges and since the public is becomming more critical of government spending, there may be increased pressure to put more restraints on the segments. CPEC may be the logical choice since it is an independent agency, already performs planning, evaluating, and coordinating functions, to assume an enlarged role. Already written into law are statements which allow the Commission to undertake other functions and responsibilities appropriate to their role. History may repeat itself in that the Legislature may exert pressure on the Commission as it did the Coordinating Council in 1969 to assume a stronger role. No doubt tneir role will change in time as everything does. Whether we want to admit it or not, political pressure holds the keys to the future of CPEC and postsecondary education in California.

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